

THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

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PRACTICAL.

VOCAL EXECUTION.

CONCLUSION. In closing up what we had to say on this subject, a few moments may not be unprofitably spent in recapitulation. This is the more necessary, because those of our patrons who commenced with the second volume, have been furnished only with a partial view of the subject.

Vocal music implies, that union of the singing and speaking voices, which shall preserve the beauty and the interest of the melody, and give energy to the words of the song. The fundamental properties of style in vocal execution are the following.

I. TONE. By this term is here meant simply the quality of voices. A good tone depends greatly on cultivation. A full, open, deep-seated enunciation of the vowels, as heard in the syllables *awe* or *ah*, will if properly persevered in, free the voice in time, from its nasal labial, dental, or guttural habits; and render it pleasant and powerful. The voice is gradually formed, by constant practice: but it necessarily decays by neglect. This is seen in the case of adults of either sex, who erroneously suppose themselves to have outlived their musical powers.

II. INTONATION. This term refers to the preservation of the pitch in reference to musical scales. As the two modern scales, major and minor, are in a great measure artificial, it ought not to surprise us that the art of true intonation, in every instance requires practice. The ancient Greeks were never known to sing scales like ours. The same is at present true of the semi-barbarous nations. A just intonation is not, therefore, the gift of nature, but the result of much practice on the principles of imitation. Experience abundantly proves that all might acquire it, by appropriate effort, put forth in the period of early childhood. Hence the great importance of juvenile instruction. If the voice is too long neglected, it becomes less manageable; and in the period of adult years it seldom forms habits that are entirely new. In

this respect it resembles the provincialisms of the native tongue. A musical ear is in every case improvable by cultivation. The most gifted singers are liable to inaccuracies. Teachers themselves are not infallible. Careful practice is necessary for every one who would learn to sing in good tune or, who having thus learned, would not lose the power of preserving just intonation. There is in this respect a great choice as to instruments and teachers. There should be daily practice in the family circle; and the members of a choir should not neglect the regular meetings for rehearsal. Bad intonation will be the inevitable consequence of such neglect. The idea that *nature* makes all the difference among singers, is wholly destitute of foundation.

III. TIME. The power of keeping time depends simply on forming, in a patient manner, habits of ready, accurate calculation. The ordinary methods of beating and counting, and calculating the various dimensions of notes in the existing varieties and movements of time, are indispensable, though not alone sufficient for the purposes intended. When calculation has become habitual, drilling exercises in connexion with a metronome or peandulum will be of great service. This subject is too much neglected. Accurate time gives a great interest to performances: especially in movements that are vivacious and rhythmical. Vocalists should not take too great liberties, in favor of the punctuation of the language. This is often done.

IV. ARTICULATION. Articulation should in music be more accurate and distinct, than in the simple forms of speech. Vowels alone are to be sung; while the consonants are to be spoken at certain given instants in the proper connexions. The vowels should be uttered in their purity, and consonants, with great distinctness and precision. Drilling exercises upon words and phrases, are of great use. Without articulation, music cannot properly be said to be vocal. Teachers are greatly remiss, not to say ignorant, in regard to this matter. Good articulation greatly augments the interest of the song. The polish of the voice depends much on the management of the vowels: the identity of the words, has in practice more reference to the consonants. The slender vowels admit of slight modifications; the mutes and aspirates should have augmented power; and the semi-vowels should not be prolonged. The breath should never be taken in the midst of a word, but as far as possible, at those places where pauses of some kind are required by the structure of the language. The first efforts in articulation will of course be rude: and for a while they will necessarily give harshness to the

language. But let the teachers persevere. Time will effect wonders. Tunes for drilling exercises should be first selected from the class of speaking melodies, such as Peterborough Sterling, Uxbridge, Duke-street, New Fiftieth. The language can be spoken in such tunes with comparatively little labor. The teacher must be systematic in his efforts, or the desired object will never be accomplished: yet he must not perplex his pupils with a multiplicity of nice observances. In ordinary cases, example will for the most part take precedent of precept. Rules should be few, but oral illustrations and exercises, abundant. Neither the language nor the song should ultimately be allowed to suffer by their united influences.

V. ACCENT AND EMPHASIS. Musical enunciation requires accent and emphasis as really as it does articulation. The manner of the vocalist will of necessity be syllabic in the first instance, but in process of time, he should be brought to give appropriate stress to certain syllables and words, in reference to the powers of language. Let one thing be done at a time; and the process will not be difficult. The teacher must himself be governed by definite principles. He must understand and exhibit the powers of language. In the present state of cultivation, the multitude of pupils will be better imitators than theorists. Make them good readers, in prose and poetry: this will aid them in song. Occasional recourse to short drilling exercises in speech and in song (at one moment separated and at the next combined) will be of great service to the pupils. In reference to accent and emphasis the rhythm of the music and of the poetry will not always agree. In such cases some delicacy of management is required: the musical accent should be enfeebled but not destroyed. Musical accents as they occur in a given movement, are for the most part equal among themselves, excepting the secondary ones which are of a subordinate character. But by the application of language in devotional music, the emphasis of words will often interfere with this species of regularity. These conflicting claims cannot be adjusted by the strict application of particular rules. Much will depend on the formation of right habits, under the guidance of an intelligent instructor.

The five preceding properties relate to what might be termed mechanical accuracy. Much time and labor are required, before the pupil will so avail himself of these properties, as to preserve an accurate, easy, flowing enunciation of the language, united with the sweetness and power of the melody. The principles of such a style are easily understood: but to reduce them well to practice is a more difficult matter.

Practice therefore should not be discontinued, when the period of instruction closes. The rudiments of style may be soon acquired; but the finishing touches demand time and labor.

VI. EXPRESSION. Accurate mechanical execution is not alone sufficient for the purposes of song; especially where amusement is not the principal object of the performance. Mechanism will not of itself secure the claims of sentiment. There must be something which makes an appeal to the affections of the mind. That quality or union of qualities which accomplishes this result, constitutes expression. This is the crowning excellence of song. It is as the soul of poetry, the pathos of eloquence, the "life" of historic paintings, the voice of "breathing marbles." Without it the art dwindles to insignificance; and its labored appeals all but powerless. Genuine feeling is the basis of expression, both in the composer and the executant. This is indispensable. Nothing can be achieved without it. The same principle applies here which prevails elsewhere in the fields of rhetoric and elocution. A man who speaks with a vacant mind, or a mind occupied with words or phrases or attitudes, or a mind embarrassed by the difficulties of his argument or by the inattention of his hearers—such a man will not be eloquent. He will be destitute of power. We may pity him or sympathise in his troubles: but the object of his address will be defeated. The case is precisely the same with the vocalist, in reference to the pathos of his art. If he wishes to move us in any moral point of view, he must himself be moved. If he wishes in devotional song to stir us up to holy activity, he must sing in the demonstration of the Spirit, in the beauty of holiness. Music has a language of narration and description, which belong more properly to the field of imagination; but in proportion as the subject becomes lyrical in the proper sense of the word, the principle of which we now speak, rises in importance. The art of music may indeed be cultivated like other arts of an analogous character. Yet constant reference must be had to the purposes to which it is to be applied. The moral historic painter would not acquire his ideas and illustrations of Christian character from the circles that oppose Christianity; nor would the aspirant to the holy office of the ministry, take lessons in sacred eloquence from the theatre. Common sense shows the application of the same principle to the Christian vocalist.

But if feeling is the sole basis of genuine expression, it must be remembered also that there is an important superstructure. The habits of singers have become sophisticated; and the tones of passion must be

learned anew. Of these there are four species in reference to the agitated motion, abrupt commencement or termination, swell or diminish. The variations of loud and soft (*crescendo* and *diminuendo*) are of much use. The same may be said of variations in time, of the legato and staccato styles of enunciation, of the rhythm and time of a movement, and of the punctuation of the words. But as these topics have so recently been discussed in the present volume, the mere mention of them must suffice.

Passing from the fundamental properties of style, we spoke at some length of the graces, and of those accidental properties which are of an adventitious nature. Here, in the present state of the art, the greatest labor of the teacher is that of the correction of bad habits, and the inculcation of just principles of taste.

On the review of this whole subject, the reader is very naturally constrained to ask, "who is sufficient for these things?" How shall teachers proceed in their arduous work? And how shall pupils ever be accomplished in the vocal art.

In answer to these inquiries we would say, that in devotional singing, no more will be required of us by the great Master of Assemblies, than to use our faithful endeavors towards improving in the best manner, the opportunities and advantages which lie within our reach. This is not done. The churches in this respect are deplorably negligent. Private Christians and Christian Ministers, seem, with few exceptions, unconscious of their responsibility and unmindful of their privileges in this matter. The blessed God is greatly and extensively dishonored in the office of sacred praise.

But we will suppose a church and minister fully awake to the importance of this subject, just supplied for a few months with a competent, pious teacher. How shall the latter proceed, in order to make the most of the little time allotted him? We speak not here of the rudiments of notation, which, however important in themselves, every teacher chooses to manage in his own way: but we refer simply to the properties of style which have been discussed in the preceding articles, under the head of vocal execution. In what order shall these be pursued; and what proportion of a pupil's time shall be devoted to them.

Our answer to such inquiries must of course be general, for the circumstances will be various. The order which has already been exhibited, is the most natural one; and one which can be conveniently pursued for all purposes of illustration. The whole of these properties, however, may be distinctly exhibited and explained, and illustrated in

a single evening, by a talented teacher. The vocalist need not fully acquire any one of them, before he proceeds with another. Each exercise, it is true, should in the early stage of practice, have a single definite specific character. Yet those of a different character may very properly succeed each other on the same evening. When the topics have all been illustrated, the mind will readily recur to them with fresh interest. And here, the natural order need not be preserved. Let the teacher exercise his own judgment. He should be governed by circumstances. Tone, and intonation and articulation, and time and accent and emphasis, are all before him, and he can select at his pleasure. And the labor of these exercises may be often relieved by the singing of hymns and by lessons in notation. At a second stage of progress, two or more properties may be combined in the exercises; and in the subsequent stages, all that relate to accurate execution. Nor need the subjects of expression and the graces be all this while neglected. In reference to the BASIS of devotional expression, let some peculiar tune be occasionally sung by the pupils, without special criticism, in such manner, as they are able, and in connexion with religious explanations of the text. This important measure should be early adopted and rigidly adhered to throughout the whole course of instruction. The sweet aspirations of praise should not on these occasions, be interrupted by critical remarks. The mind should be wholly disengaged at such times, that it may fill itself with the thoughts and feelings which are suggested by the themes of song.

The items which we have named in this connexion as constituting the superstructure, may receive in the first instance, separate attention like other things.

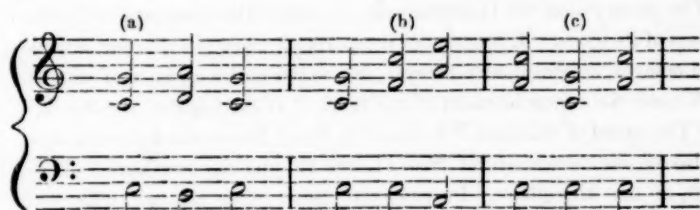
In the way here hinted, a good foundation is laid for solid improvement. Such a foundation will be likely to remain. A single quarter's instruction thus given, will make impressions not easily eradicated. A second course of instruction will secure greater measures of progress; and a third and a fourth will bring additional advantages. If the work is carried forward thus on Christian principles it will surely stand. For the happy result of such a method we are willing to be responsible to our readers. All other methods are liable to fail.

THEORETICAL.

HARMONY.

Forbidden Successions. We have intimated that succession of chords must have reference to strict rules. Though considerable latitude is allowed for the exercise of taste and invention, in regard to this particular, yet there are certain limits that may not be surpassed.

1. Perfect fifths should not succeed each other in a similar ascending or descending progression, either by degrees or skips. The following examples exhibit this error.

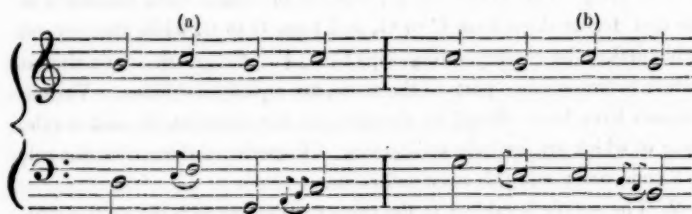


The fault as here exhibited lies in the treble staff. At the reference (a) the first treble ascends from G to A, and descends from A to G, while the second treble, at the same time ascends from C to D, and descends from D to C, forming at each remove the interval of a perfect fifth. At the reference (b) the first treble skips from G to C, and from C to E: while the second treble at the same moment skips from C to F, and from F to A, forming at each skip, the same interval of a perfect fifth. The reference (c) exhibits the same fault, inasmuch as the first treble skips from C to G, and from G to C, while the second treble makes the corresponding skips F, C, F. Progressions of a similar nature between other parts of the score, are equally forbidden. Various reasons have been offered by theorists for the existence of such a rule, none of which are entirely satisfactory. Experience shows that the rule is a good one; and this must suffice us.

2. The octave is subject to the same restrictions with the perfect fifth. Had the base, for instance in the above example, moved in octaves or double octaves with either of the trebles, this rule would have been violated. The reason for this rule is obvious. Octaves, double octaves, &c. add nothing to the variety, which is so indispensable to the richness of harmony. Unisons also in this point of view add nothing but

simple power to the intervals thus doubled. There are some exceptions against this rule: yet the rule is never to be set aside without sufficient reason. 1, Base notes are often doubled in the octave throughout a whole passage or movement, with fine effect. Witness the tune "Thine Lord for ever," at No. 10 of the Miscellany published in this Magazine. There the effect is to strengthen the base part in the score, not to change the specific character of the chords. A corresponding license is sometimes granted to high treble instruments, but the result is not always so satisfactory. 2, An organ or piano-forte often plays notes in different octaves from the voices, or from other instruments. The organ is allowed this license, because its tones are so blended as to make the octave and the unison produce a similar impression upon the ear. The piano claims this indulgence on account of the comparative feebleness of its tones. 3, Sometimes the parts all move together for a while in octaves, unisons double octaves, &c. to the entire absence of chords. Witness the commencement of the tunes "Wake Isles of the South," "The sound of Salvation," as found in Music Sacra and Spiritual songs; also the commencement of Nos. 11, and 23, and the termination of No. 29, of the Miscellany. Instrumental music often abounds with such passages; and the effect is very powerful. But in all such cases there is an obvious design. Specifically, in the structure of chords, the rule holds good, and ought not to be violated.

3. Not only are these successions of fifths and octaves forbidden; but the very resemblances or suspicions of them are not allowed. The scientific ear is always alive to impressions of this kind; and takes offence at the mere seeming violations of the above rules. Such examples as the following are of this character.



At the references (a) and (b) the small notes are inserted merely to show the relations of the large ones. Yet it often happens in modern music that such transient notes when not written, are supplied by the vocalist or instrumental executant, and in such a case, they form some thing more than suspicions or resemblances of faults. They become actual

violations of a fundamental rule. At the reference (a) are exhibited specimens severally of the ascending successions of fifth and of eighths ; and at (b) a similar descending succession. We suppose the compositions to be written without the small notes which point out the hidden succession ; but if the small notes are actually sung or played, the effect is precisely the same as if the composition had exhibited them to the eye. Now the very circumstance that these little notes are liable to be supplied (we do not say with how much propriety) by the executant, creates what is termed a suspicion of error. Still in the internal parts of the score, these progressions are allowed, and in some cases, even between the base and treble. If the two parts in question proceed by opposite motions, the passages will assume an entirely different character, inasmuch as the supposed transient notes create no error.



4th—Fifths, major and minor, being of a different character are permitted occasionally to succeed each other in the manner which is not allowed to perfect fifths. But this license must not occur too often.

5—Two perfect fourths may succeed each other ; particularly when the harmony passes from the subdominant to the dominant, at the close of a strain, or movement—But it must be remembered that when these fourths are inverted, by an exchange of parts in the score, they become forbidden successions of fifths—Errors often originate in this manner.

6—Thirds and sixes being imperfect chords, whether major or minor, are allowed to succeed each other at pleasure. As to sevenths it will appear under the head of sequences, that they may be so managed as to form interesting successions.

The rules thus exhibited may be properly termed fundamental. Other distinctions and observances will also occur to the careful student : but our limits forbid a more detailed enumeration. With these few examples and rules before him, let the student resume the work of analysing passages and strains of harmony—This kind of exercise will be highly beneficial. It is like the reading of prose and poetry to the student who would acquire a knowledge of language.

SOLMISATION.

By the term Solmisation is understood the systematic application of arbitrary syllables to the musical scales. In instrumental music the syllables *do ra, mi, &c.*, are by one class of musicians used merely to designate the lines and spaces of the staff. Thus employed they are substitutes for the first seven letters of the alphabet. An eminent English theorist uses the same syllables to designate every where, the diatonic scales major and minor; printing the syllables in the one case in English letters, in the other in Italics. One class of teachers use *ut*, instead of *do*; another use four syllables only, *faw sol, law, mi*; another use the numbers, 1, 2, 3, &c; another the vowels. There are still other methods in use, which it is perhaps unnecessary to mention. The object in most cases, is to establish a mental association between certain arbitrary names and musical sounds; so that a given name will uniformly bring to mind a certain note of the scale.

The utility of solmisation has been questioned by some; and if the vocalist could always have an accompanying instrument at hand the necessity of arbitrary syllables would be superseded. But as no vocalist can carry an organ, or piano-forte, or violin in his pocket, he ought to have some practical system of solmisation at hand as a sort of substitute. The touches of the instrumental executant uniformly bring to the ear corresponding sounds, but without an instrument, the entrance into the mind of certain syllables presents to the imagination with equal uniformity, the same sounds relatively speaking, which the touches would produce on the instrument. The syllables do not indeed give the required pitch of the tune, yet they give the tune itself, with sufficient accuracy. Old Hundred, for instance, will be Old Hundred still, though given in a pitch which is too high or too low for convenience. The sounds relatively speaking will be the same. An instrument also, may be tuned higher or lower while the touches produce sounds in their accustomed relations.

The question is often asked among vocalists, what system of solmisation ought to be preferred. The mere instrumental executant will readily answer *none*. He feels not the need of any. The mere touches will answer his purpose. Syllables would only embarrass his attention. Solmisation to him, would be like fetters to the pedestrian. He forgets that the vocalist has no mechanical touches; and that arbitrary syllables systematically applied, are required to supply this deficiency. In his ignorance of this important principle he laughs at the fancied simplicity

of the vocalist ; and tries to dissuade him from his course. This mistake has led multitudes to despise solmisation, as a thing suited only to the capacities of children ; and we are here presented with one fruitful source of the general neglect of elementary instruction.

If the question, as to systems of solmisation be referred to distinguished teachers of vocal music, each individual will have a preference for the system which he himself has reduced so long ago to practice, that it has become second nature to him. All other systems, excepting the one which he has adopted, appear inconvenient. Here and there one, by way of exception, exchanges an old system for a new one, that he may be thought to keep up with modern notions of improvement. Of course when his new system has been fully mastered and rendered familiar, he has achieved something worthy of notice. He sees wonderful advantages arising from it, and marvels at the stupidity of others who have not followed his example.

But the most intelligent theorists in our own and in foreign lands, are ready to admit that each of the existing systems has its special advantages, while they scarcely venture to give preference to any one in particular. All of the systems tend ultimately to the same result. In the early stages of progress seven syllables have an advantage over four : but as the pupil advances to specimens of difficult music where facilities are the most needed, the advantage is decidedly in favor of four syllables. This we think may be safely laid down as a general principle. The case may be different, where a pupil intends acquiring a thorough knowledge of the whole science ; but in most cases, our own experience is in favor of four syllables in preference to seven. We do not lay much stress however, upon the selection of a system. More depends upon the teacher. In the present state of the art we are willing that every teacher should take his own course. Let him follow it faithfully and leave others to do as they choose. The subject is not sufficiently important for protracted discussion. Whatever system is adopted, let it be adhered to ; and industry and good feeling will in due time, secure the result. Suffice it to say, that in times like the present, every teacher should acquaint himself with different systems, and so far master them as to be able to pursue any one of them at pleasure. Having made this attainment, he ought to be a modest man : and certainly he will be able to discover reasons for the course we have now recommended.

A single point more, and we shall have done. It is urged by some as a matter of great consequence that there should be a uniformity of

systems throughout the country. This thing will not be, at least, at the present crisis in musical affairs. Experiments must be further tried. The thing in itself would be convenient and desirable but the time has not come when such a measure can be carried with success. Still if any man thinks differently, or if any body of men choose to make such an experiment, we have nothing to say in opposition. If the experiment succeeds all will be well; if it fails, the efforts will perhaps be entitled to commendation.

MISCELLANEOUS.

For the Musical Magazine.

BAD CALCULATION.

What should you think, Mr. Editor, if a manufacturer were first to lay in immense quantities of cotton or wool or iron ore, and hire a sufficient number of hands to work it up and put them all under pay, before he had commenced building a factory edifice? Or what if a silk-maker were to build his factory, procure his eggs, and make every preparation for spinning and weaving before he had planted his mulberry trees? Such management would be ridiculous in the extreme.—And yet, if I mistake not, there is something not very unlike it in many places amid the field of musical cultivation. I allude particularly to the usual method of procuring an organ, as if were the only thing required to perfect the praises of God in his sanctuary.

I am no enemy to the proper use of the organ, as an accompanying instrument—I like it. I love sometimes to put my own fingers upon it, and lift my soul upward on the wings of heavenly contemplation. But the organ after all cannot talk. It cannot say “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.” It is the living voice of the worshipper that must say that. The organ cannot utter a single syllable—it even increases the difficulties of vocal enunciation; and what is worse, we can seldom imagine it, by the power of mental association, to be saying any thing in praise or blame of any body but the instrumental performer. Its blunders advertise us of his carelessness or want of skill. Its flourishes speak in praise of his

dexterity. Its sweetest blendings of harmony, followed by sudden out-breakings of "wild uproar," make us think more about the organist with his fine and powerful instrument, than about the great Master of Assemblies who is the professed object of our worship. And this is an offence of no small magnitude in the sight of him who looketh upon the heart, who acknowledgeth no worship but that which is in spirit and in truth. His glory he will never give to the organist nor to the organ.

The organ as you have often told us, is an accompanying instrument. This supposes that there is something to be accompanied. It supposes that voices shall be principal and the instrument subordinate. True, says the purchaser, this may be right in theory. But it is hard getting along in our old dull laborious way. We are behind the spirit of the times, We "shall never have any good singing till we get a good organ." So the people subscribe; an organ is obtained, and given into the hands of whoever can be found to play it. The latter in the multitude of instances is either not a pious man or he is a bad performer. In either case, the organ embarrasses the conscientious vocalists; and the singing is worse than before. On the one hand, the organ drags and they cannot keep the time; it strikes the wrong notes, and they cannot hit the right ones; Or on the other hand, it flourishes at such a rate as to destroy vocal simplicity, it speaks so multitudinously that the singers can neither hear themselves or follow out the plain notes of the tune. The voices are not seconded, but overwhelmed. Singing is rendered more difficult than ever. It grows worse and worse; and the organist must drown it. So in the necessity of the case, the organist becomes principal, and the voices subordinate. Unpleasant feelings arise. The vocalist knows nothing about the instrument; and the player, though perchance he pretend to know every thing, is equally ignorant of vocal music. The latter takes a pique and leaves the instrument; or the former get vexed and leaves the choir. Meanwhile, the congregation, have learned to venerate the sublime and noble tones of an instrument, that looks so well, that is so fashionable, and that has cost them so much money. They blame the singer and side with the instrument; and the organist with all his faults or superfluities, since they know not where to find another, has them at length completely in his own power. The singers quit the field and every subsequent effort to replace them ends in disaster. A whole generation passes before matters can be fully retrieved.

This is no sketch of the fancy. It is plain matter of history that has been ten thousand times verified in this country and in Europe. In England, and in some parts of Germany, it has grown into a universal

maxim among the educated musicians that the vulgar notes of the people must be overwhelmed by the organist ; and pupils upon the organ are instructed accordingly.

I have said that I am no enemy to the proper use of the organ as an accompanying instrument, and you, Mr. Editor, have often told us how it should be employed in the praises of God. But the people seem slow to hear, and slower yet to believe. They must be in fashion. They cannot wait to have a band of singers properly disciplined. This takes time and labor, and requires self-denial. They must get the organ first and run their risk of being able to train up voices as principals in worship. They get the factory at once, and set it at work ; but they intend afterwards to plant the mulberry trees and wait for them to grow.

KENANIAH.

CHRISTIAN PSALMIST.

This publication thus far, meets with special success. Delicacy requires that *we* should say but little as to its merits or patronage, That little however, our readers have a right to expect from us. The work made its first appearance last May, since which time it has reached its fifth edition, and been adopted by about thirty churches in this city and elsewhere. Testimonials in its favor, have been unequivocal. It is now offered at the bookstores in various forms, and sizes, and bindings ; and since it has been stereotyped, churches can easily be supplied to any amount that is desired.

There is one special feature in this work which will be interesting to the lovers of improvement in sacred music. We allude to the subject of peculiar metres—These are various and abundant. One of the greatest obstacles to improvement in modern times has been the want of varied metres—This deficiency is now supplied.

Another point of importance is that which relates to the variety of topics. The Psalmist if we are not mistaken surpasses other publications in this respect. It embraces hymns for private and social uses, as well as for public occasions, of an ordinary and special nature. This will be seen by a mere reference to the order of subjects at the close of the volume.

But lastly, the *order* of hymns is to the devotional reader, a matter of no small moment. Most persons of this description take much comfort in the reading of hymns which are adapted to their circumstances and feelings. But a single hymn is scarcely long enough to answer all that is thus required ; and by so arranging the leading topics,

and the hymns, as to enable the reader to peruse a number in immediate succession with increasing interest, the difficulty to which we here refer, has been in a great measure obviated. Under the various heads, the hymns succeed each other somewhat as constituent portions of a continuous poem. To make Christians attached to good hymns and psalms is one important step towards producing a fondness for devotional singing.

In one or two instances we have noticed in the public journals complaints of real or alleged alterations of Watt's original hymns. We would recommend such persons as feel dissatisfied in reference to this matter, to read Doct. Dwight's preface to his Psalm Book. He made great alterations of Watts, and would have made greater, but for the public prejudice against such a measure. The English manuals of devotion manifest far less hesitation. Their alterations are very abundant. The English compilers seem to think the character of a public manual of devotion, to be of far more importance than the preservation of the exact identity of the productions of a favorite author. Many of the seeming alterations which the Christian Psalmist presents, however, are nothing more nor less than restorations of the original.

Far greater liberties have been taken by others, than by the compilers of this work.—Watts, let it be remembered, has never been given in the original to the American churches. Many of his pieces have always been omitted or abridged, or so much altered as to have little resemblance to the original.

NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SACRED MUSIC.

The meetings of this institution are now held in the Session Room of the Brick Chapel, (Dr. Springs). The rehearsals are increasing in interest; and we trust that the friends of musical improvement will have no reason to regret the exertions they are making in its favor. We are happy to say that the prospects of the institution are on the increase. If more ought to be done than is yet undertaken, we are nevertheless, not to despise the day of small things. Some undertakings that are very rapid in their growth, will soon fall into decay. The books now before the institution are *Musica Sacra*, Boston Academy Collection, *The Miscellany*, and the first number of the "Anthems, Motets," &c. just published by the New York institution.

NEW WORKS.

Mr. Mason of Boston, is publishing a series of small numbers, containing occasional compositions and selections, most of which are adapted to the wants of choirs that have made considerable progress in the musical art.

Several new singing books, we understand are making their way through the Boston press—Our country bids fair to be ultimately supplied with such articles, so far at least as quantities are concerned. As to the *merits* of the forthcoming production, we have no means of information.

The Mother's Hymn Book published by the Editor of this Magazine, has just undergone an English edition. The publisher inserts his own name and omits that of the original author, allowing the work however to be a re-print of an American work. The work has an increasing circulation in our own country.

The following Ode was written for the recent Anniversary of the American Institute and sung to the tune "Soft Echoes," contained in the first number of the Miscellany. It may be useful, perhaps for other occasions which have reference to the arts and sciences of civilized life.

I saw the light of Science dawn,
The Arts begin to rise,
And Virtue from her heaven built throne
Descending through the skies:

O then the vices fled in haste,
And Guilt withdrew her stain,
Oppression from her throne was cast,
And Tyranny was slain.

Then Industry awoke the song,
And Enterprise drew near,
And Commerce mingled with the throng,
The free born race to cheer.

I saw Religion from above,
Descend upon the earth,
And Peace, and Harmony, and Love,
United spring to birth.

O then the darkness fled apace,
And Sorrow wore a smile,
Blessings descended on the race,
For man no more was vile.

The Sun of Righteousness arose,
The latter day drew nigh,
Clamor was hushed to sweet repose,
And earth was filled with joy.